

ADVERTISEMENT

Natan Sharansky 'embarrassed' by lack of Israeli support for Ukraine



THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

and Soviet political prisoner says it's a disgrace that not even a Knesset delegation has visited Kyiv

By **ASH OBEL**

30 October 2022, 1:36 pm |



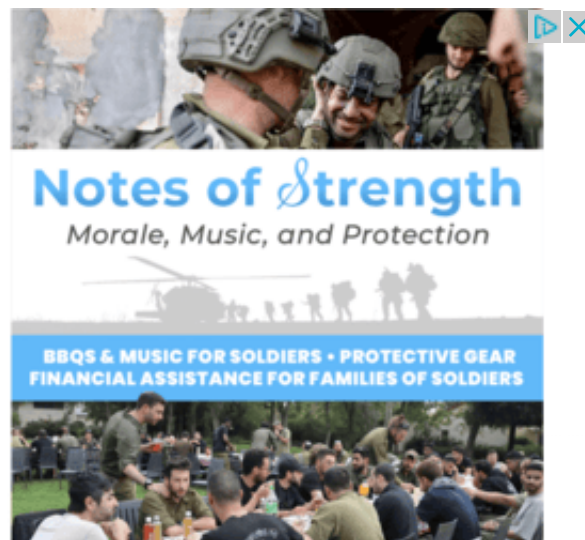
Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky (L) and Natan Sharansky in Kyiv, October 25, 2022 (courtesy Ukraine Presidential Office)



Natan Sharansky, former cabinet minister and the chairman of the Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center board, said he was “embarrassed” after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky chastised the Israeli government for its policies on Ukraine.

During a [meeting](#) last week, Zelensky told Sharansky, who was a former political prisoner of the Soviet Union, that with the exception of Hungary, Israel was the only country “in the free world” that has not supplied Ukraine with weapons in its war with Russia, Ynet reported.

ADVERTISEMENT



The Ukrainian president said that there are only a few countries capable of providing Ukraine with the air defense systems it needs to defend itself from aerial attack, and that it is “only natural that Israel is one of them.”

After their one-on-one meeting in Kyiv, which lasted 20 minutes and was followed by a longer one with the entire board — and was interrupted by a blackout — Sharansky admitted, “I was embarrassed to be the first Israeli public figure to meet with him. Since the outbreak of the war, many world leaders have come to Kyiv to meet with Zelensky in order to strengthen him.”

**Get The Times of Israel's Daily Edition
by email and never miss our top stories**

Your email

GET IT

By signing up, you agree to the [terms](#)

“No one has come from Israel, not even a Knesset delegation. It’s really a disgrace. In every meeting there is massive disappointment with Israel,” Sharansky said.

Though it has sent multiple shipments of humanitarian aid to Ukraine, Israel has repeatedly rebuffed Kyiv’s requests for defensive weapons, specifically missile defense systems that could be used to fend off Russian bombardments, despite expressing sympathy for the country’s plight.

ADVERTISEMENT

Israel’s refusal is seen as an attempt by Jerusalem to maintain working ties with Moscow due to Russia’s control of Syrian airspace, where Israel’s air force has carried out hundreds of sorties to keep groups backed by Tehran from establishing a foothold and to block alleged Iranian arms shipments to terror groups.

Israeli officials have also expressed fear that advanced military technology could fall into enemy hands and cited production and supply limitations.

Despite the policy, Zelensky said last week that relations between Israel and Ukraine have [begun to improve](#), citing intelligence cooperation between the countries relating to Iranian-made Shahed drones employed by the Russian military against Ukraine.

ADVERTISEMENT

“We are at the beginning of cooperation. This is a positive trend in relations with Israel,” Zelensky told reporters, adding that “after a long pause, I see us moving forward.”

Sharansky has been an outspoken supporter of Ukraine since Russia invaded in late February, and has been urging Israeli officials to change their relatively neutral policy on the war.

Sharansky argued that it was Israel’s “duty” to provide Ukraine with weapons, saying, “The people of Ukraine need this, but we also need it as part of the free world, because [Russian President Vladimir] Putin has encroached on the foundations of the free world and wants to deprive us of this freedom.”

Lazar Berman contributed to this report.

ADVERTISEMENT

READ MORE:

- [Israel & the Region](#)
- [Russian invasion of Ukraine](#)
- [Natan Sharansky](#)
- [Volodymyr Zelensky](#)
- [Israel-Ukraine relations](#)
- [Babyn Yar](#)



© 2024 THE TIMES OF ISRAEL, All Rights Reserved

DEVELOPED BY

POWERED BY